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Crackdown Leaves Taiwan Opposition Leaderless, Weak

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TAIPEI, Taiwan, Jan. 2—Following one of the most violent political riots here in 30 years, Taiwan's nationalist Chinese government has jailed much of its political opposition in a key southern port and shut down all major opposition publications on the island.

It is a tense moment in a constantly shifting relationship between government and opposition that will determine the political future of this prosperous island and its eventual relationship with both the Chinese mainland and Taiwan's principal ally, the United States.

The latest crackdown, resulting from a Dec. 10 riot at the port city of Kaohsiung, also shows the government's continued skill at handling its few vocal critics.

The dissidents, mostly native Taiwanese seeking more say in a government dominated by elderly anticommunist refugees from the Chinese mainland, have been betrayed by their own inexperience and clumsiness. The government has been able to suppress them without visibly disturbing Taiwan's economic and social health or diminishing the popularity of President Chiang Ching-kuo's government.

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At the Dec. 10 Kaohsiung riot, the government's opponents seriously weakened their standing in what is one of their strongholds by allowing a World Human Rights Day march to get out of control. When huge crowds of onlookers and a line of military police closed off the exits from a traffic circle reached by about 500 demonstrators, 50 or 70 young men armed with torches and iron clubs attacked the government men, who had wooden clubs and shields. There were attacks on police, who had reportedly beaten two opposition sup-

porters the night before and who were blamed for the ransacking of some opposition offices.

More than 40 policemen and government security officers were hospitalized. The dissidents could produce no evidence of serious injuries to their own people. The government rushed to televise pictures of the most seriously injured police. Thus there was little public outcry when police arrested about 40 of the government opponents involved in the riot.

Taipei authorities quickly shut down the popular, 50,000 circulation magazine that had sponsored the march. Meilitao, which means "beautiful island" but is usually translated into the equivalent Portuguese word, Formosa. Government hardliners, seeing an opportunity to silence all opponents, then also closed the one remaining opposition magazine, a moderate periodical called The Eighties. Shih Ming-teh, an electrifying orator who was general manager of Formosa magazine and a leading march organizer, went into hiding. The government has offered a \$13,890 reward for information leading to his capture and has deported his outspoken American wife, Linda Arrigo. Arrigo speaks fluent Mandarin as well as the local Amoy dialect spoken by Taiwanese. She was active before her deportation in enlisting support from the foreign press, held a press conference in Hong Kong on her way back to the United States and has continued to approach newspapers near her home in California.

The government has tried to discredit Arrigo, allowing the publication of an allegedly false report that she was trained by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

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